

COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC/PUBLIC SAFETY

November 9, 2004

5:30 PM

Chairman Sysyn called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Sysyn, Smith, O'Neil

Absent: Aldermen Guinta, Forest

Messrs.: K. Dillon, D. Boutillier, Lt. Valenti, Deputy Solicitor Arnold,
Captain Mara

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Discussion regarding parking garage rate increase from \$65 to \$70.

Chairman Sysyn stated I asked that this be put on the agenda.

Alderman O'Neil asked isn't this a continuation of our...we started a program a few years ago to increase the rate \$5 every year. Isn't this just a continuation of that?

Chairman Sysyn responded yes but it never came up this year. It should have been brought in before this and we could raise it to the \$70 and maybe put it into effect...

Alderman O'Neil interjected don't we usually put it into effect in January. January 1 or something.

Chairman Sysyn responded yes.

Alderman O'Neil moved to increase the parking garage rate from \$65 to \$70 effective January 1, 2005. Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Communication from Patricia Mehlhorn, Owner of Tee Off at Mel's Family Entertainment Center requesting directional signage at the new intersection for the Manchester Airport.

Alderman O'Neil stated the Airport Director is here. I guess my question would be if we allow this one where is it going to stop. The next thing you know, people won't know what signs are to the Airport. I don't know if the Director has any comments to make on it.

Mr. Kevin Dillon stated you are correct. It is something that concerns us out at the Airport. As you know, over the past few years we have invested considerable money trying to improve the airport road and Brown Avenue, the intersection at that location. We have tried to clean it up and insure that the only signage in that area is traffic related signage. We do feel that if you start putting these signs out there it is going to take away from the attention of drivers that we are trying to direct to the Airport. As Alderman O'Neil pointed out, we are not too sure how we would handle other requests that would come in because there are a number of businesses that are located not only in Litchfield but in Manchester as well that would probably seek the same type of advertising value that that could provide. So it is something that we are against at the Airport.

Alderman O'Neil moved to receive and file. Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Usage of seatbelts by city employees.

Alderman Smith moved to approve the new seatbelt policy. Alderman O'Neil duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Traffic situation at Harvey Road and Bouchard Street.

Alderman DeVries stated I have heard back from several of the departments who can speak on their own behalf if they wish to. My understanding at this point in time is that Police have been out to the intersection and does concur that during peak hours there are some issues that could be addressed there. The Traffic Department has sought and maybe Denise could speak to this but I believe they

have gone ahead to reach out to Southern NH Planning, which at this time is without a Director.

Ms. Denise Boutillier stated Tom and Jim met with Moni Sharma. He is still working with Southern NH Planning. They met with him in Hooksett and he has begun the process of the study at Bouchard Street and Harvey Road. We are awaiting the results of that study.

Alderman DeVries stated I would remind the Committee if I may that the purpose of involving Southern NH Planning is that there is one intersection that actually lies in Londonderry just south of Harvey and Bouchard. I believe it is South Perimeter and Harvey that is also part of the traffic problems in that area. We are looking to collectively study those two intersections and to adjust them if Londonderry wishes to cooperate at the same time to the best solution for peak hour flow.

Ms. Boutillier stated they are also doing the study free of charge for us.

Alderman O'Neil asked has the Airport been involved with this at all. I am guessing that most of the tenants are probably...

Alderman DeVries interjected I guess I can address it if Kevin Dillon would like me to because we had a brief conversation on it. Yes it is part...a lot of the airpark businesses do empty through this particular intersection. It is not directly part of the Airport so I don't believe they saw immediately the need to be part of the studies. If we do see in the results of the Southern NH study the need to address that with the Airport we shall.

Alderman O'Neil asked do we know is there a high accident count or is traffic stacking up.

Alderman DeVries replied I will let Police address that if they wish to.

Lt. Valenti stated we actually ran an accident report for a two-year period at that intersection and what we found was there were roughly four accidents.

Alderman O'Neil responded so it is actually just congestion or a stacking of traffic.

Lt. Valenti stated we also put the counter out, the traffic counter, which counts the amount of vehicles and the speed. We found the average vehicle was going 35 mph to 45 mph. So there is some speed there.

Alderman O'Neil asked so you folks will be taking a look at some enforcement down there.

Lt. Valenti answered that is correct.

Alderman O'Neil moved to table this item. Alderman Smith duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

Policy for parking meter bags.

Clerk Fysh noted that a policy was distributed to the Committee this evening.

Alderman Smith asked for a few minutes to read the policy.

Alderman O'Neil stated I have a plumbing company and I have a van and it isn't marked. It is an unmarked van. Am I considered a commercial vehicle?

Deputy Solicitor Arnold responded that is why I put commercial or business vehicle. Of course we would prefer that they be marked with some type of signage but I certainly realize that there may be occasion when it is not. What we were basically looking to do is make sure that passenger vehicles dropping off workers or whatever are not using these bags.

Alderman O'Neil stated and just from an enforcement standpoint, Lt., if a bag is found beyond 8 PM how are we going to handle that. If I read this right, the bag will be removed.

Lt. Valenti stated all of the meter bags are locked. We have a key and we would remove them.

Alderman O'Neil stated that was a big issue. People leaving the bags on at night and on the weekend. So this really cleans it up. Are you in favor of this?

Lt. Valenti responded yes I am.

Alderman O'Neil asked Denise are you okay with the hood policy.

Ms. Boutillier answered yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked and Deputy Solicitor Arnold, you are in favor.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold answered yes and I hope it fulfills what I thought the Committee's instructions were.

Alderman Smith moved to approve the parking meter bag policy. Alderman O'Neil duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Sysyn addressed Item 8 of the agenda:

Chairman Sysyn advises that the Traffic Department has submitted an agenda, which needs to be addressed as follows:

Parking 10 Minutes (7 Days)

On Spruce St., south side, from Lincoln St. to a point 50 feet westerly
Alderman Osborne

No Parking

On Spruce St., north side, from Hall St. to a point 100 feet westerly
Alderman Osborne

On Paquette Ave., south side, from a point 840 feet east of Union St. to a point 110 feet east
Alderman Roy

On Taylor St., east side, from a point 130 feet south of Valley St. to a point 50 feet south
Alderman Shea

On Pond Dr., south side, from a point 310 feet west of Kennedy Ave. to a point 75 feet westerly
Alderman DeVries

Rescind Parking 30 Minutes

On Spruce St., south side, from Lincoln St. to a point 50 feet westerly (#6171)
Alderman Osborne

Rescind No Parking

On Spruce St., north side, from Hall St. to a point 50 feet west (#446)
Alderman Osborne

On Pearl St., south side, from a point 40 feet east of Chestnut St. to Pine St. (#3490)

On Pearl St., south side, from Pine St. to Union St. (#7287)

On Orange St., north side, from Chestnut St. to a point 70 feet easterly (#3465)

On Orange St., south side, from Chestnut St. to Pine St. (#3470)

On Orange St., south side, from Pine St. to Union St. (#6513)

On Orange St., north side, from Union St. to a point 65 feet west (#3462)

Alderman Guinta

Parking One Hour (8AM-6PM)

On Pearl St., north side, from Chestnut St. to Pine St.

Alderman Guinta

Rescind Parking 1 Hour (7 Days)

On Pearl St., north Side, from Pine St. to Chestnut St. (#7286)

Alderman Guinta

Stop Sign

On Pearl St. at Pine, nwc

On Pearl St. at Union, nwc

On Orange St. at Pine St., sec

On Orange St. at Chestnut St., sec

Alderman Guinta

On Brent St. at Alameda St., sec, nwc

On S. Porter St. at S. Porter St., nec

Alderman DeVries

On Larchmont St. at Harrison St., sec

On Bruce Rd. at Harrison St., nwc

Alderman Gatsas

On Lincoln St. at Cedar St., swc Backup

On Lincoln St. at Cedar St., nec Backup

Alderman Osborne

On Dover St. at Douglas St., sec

Alderman Thibault

On Dexter St. at Youville St., nec

Alderman Forest

Rescind Stop Sign

On Pearl St. at Chestnut St., nec

On Pearl St. at Pine St., nec

On Orange St. at Union St., swc

On Orange St. at Pine St., swc

Alderman Guinta

No Parking Loading Zone (8AM-5PM Mon-Sat)

On A St., south side, from a point 205 feet west of Bowman St. to a point 30 feet west

Alderman Smith

Crosswalks

On Kelley St. west of Joliette St.

On Joliette St. south of Kelley St.

On Kelley St. east of Laval St.

On Laval St. south of Kelley St

Alderman Thibault

No Parking Loading Zone

On Lowell St., north side, from Beech Westback St. to a point 35 feet west

Alderman Sysyn

Parking 1 Hours 8AM-6PM

On Lowell St., north side, from a point 35 feet west of Beech Westback St. to Walnut St.

Alderman Sysyn

Rescind Parking 1 Hour

On Lowell St., north side, from Walnut St. to Walnut Eastback St. (#3246)

Alderman Sysyn

No Parking During School Hours

On Circle Road, west side, from a point 100 feet south of Weston Rd. to Manor Dr.

On Circle Rd., east side, from Manor Dr. to Manor Dr.

On Manor Dr., east and west side, from Circle Road to Circle Road

Alderman DeVries Emergency Act

Rescind No Parking Anytime

On A St., south side, from a point 235 Feet west of Bowman St. to a point 100 feet west (#8857)

Alderman Smith

No Parking Anytime

On A St., south side, from a point 235 feet west of Bowman St. to a point 42 feet west

On W. Hancock St., north side, from Dartmouth St. to a point 65 feet west
Alderman Smith

Parking 1 Hour (8AM-6PM Mon-Sat)

On Nelson St., south side, from a point 100 feet west of Mammoth Rd. to a point 70 feet west

Alderman Osborne

Double Yellow Line

On S. Jewett St. between Cilley Rd. and Weston Rd.

Alderman DeVries

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil it was voted to approve the traffic agenda as submitted.

TABLED ITEMS

3. Portion of report of Traffic Committee referred back to Committee 4/8/2003 regarding the adoption of regulations:
One-Way Streets:
Hollis Street
Kidder Street

This item remained on the table.

10. Report regarding parking garage contract RFP's.

This item remained on the table.

11. Report of the Traffic Committee recommending that all metered parking be changed from Monday-Friday, 8AM-8PM to Monday-Friday, 8AM-6PM.

This item remained on the table.

12. Request from Chief Kane to be relieved of his directive to spend 98% of his allocation so that they can explore restoring staffing for their out of service ladder trucks during the remainder of the fiscal year.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Smith it was voted to remove this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Roy it was to receive and file.

NEW BUSINESS

Deputy City Clerk Johnson stated it is my understanding that the towing was coming up. The Traffic Committee is typically the one that deals with the towing contracts. I know that it is in CIP as well and I know the Chairman of CIP happens to be on the Traffic Committee so I thought that might be an advantage. We did leave it on the CIP Committee because they had requested to review it but we felt that the Traffic Committee should also review it. We can report in to the CIP Committee what the Traffic Committee has found. There is an issue, I guess, with the request of increase. Lt. Valenti is here and I am sure he could address it.

Alderman O'Neil stated if I understood Carol there has been a concern raised.

Lt. Valenti stated if I could just give a little history, in speaking with Deputy Simmons who was in the Traffic Division in the late 80's and early 90's, the history of the fee at that time was \$90 - \$35 to the City and \$55 to the contractor. In the early 90's, that fee was actually decreased. It was brought down from \$90 to \$85 with the contractor getting \$65 and the City getting \$20. Since the early 90's there hasn't been a rate increase although there has been an increase in cost to the City and to the contractor. We are appearing here tonight to request a fee increase.

Chairman Sysyn asked so you are going from \$85 to \$125.

Alderman O'Neil asked would the City still only get \$20 of that.

Captain Mara stated we are proposing that the towing fee go up to \$125. Currently what happens is we get \$20 and what we are proposing is that we get \$25. We believe that increase for the City is needed because now we are going to have two different locations. We are going to have to provide a police officer at both locations so that will be an increased cost. Also my understanding from reading the minutes of the last CIP meeting, we are building two impound lots and it is going to be an increased cost to the City to build those lots. The Police Department feels that is necessary to supplement the added cost to cover these expenses. Lt. Valenti actually had provided a comparison, a snow emergency comparison as to what those costs would be that I will hand out. Just for the

Committee's information, the current contract ends on December 14 of this year. So that remains in effect and that covers one impound lot. We are currently in negotiation with the towing companies as far as the new contract. We currently have a draft of that new contract.

Alderman Smith stated actually we are almost doubling the fee for towing from \$85 to \$125. What guarantees...I follow your logic in demanding more money but have you talked with the towing companies and told them that we expect the City to receive a \$40 or \$45 increase or are they dictating to you?

Captain Mara responded actually they had come with a proposal to us. They had actually asked for \$120 plus the additional \$20 that we get and we didn't feel that much of an increase was necessary. Not to go off on a tangent but they do make a good point about the increase. They now have to man...their responsibility under the contract is the snowshed. At the impound lots they have to supply somebody for the lot as well as somebody at the shed. So they are going to be doubling their costs. They pointed out the cost in fuel as well as the cost for the extra personnel. I called around and there are not many towns in New Hampshire that actually have a snow emergency. Generally speaking I got their tow rates just for regular tows. For Nashua it is \$75 and during their snow emergencies they don't deal with as many cars as we do but during their emergency the tow companies provide tow trucks and they get \$75 per hour per truck. They do it differently. Dover Police Department charges \$65 for a tow and \$80 for off hours. Portsmouth charges \$75 and for off hours it is \$100. I just called around to get some comparisons. Tow companies also had a concern that we feel the City has addressed. They had a big concern with hills. When you are going down towards Electric Avenue at the West Side Arena they had a problem with sliding down in the winter with snow. We have met with the Highway Department and they have assured us that they will make that area safe and keep it sanded. Those are the types of things we have been discussing with the tow companies.

Alderman Smith stated what I am getting at is if we do increase it what guarantee are we going to have that we will get the additional money. Are you going to say this is the additional money that we want and the tow companies only get a certain percentage?

Captain Mara responded that is going to be addressed in the tow contract that they are going to be bound to and we are going to be keeping track of that to make sure that we get the extra money. We are talking about increasing our amount from \$20 to \$25 so that would be \$5 per car. We have a breakdown that I will hand out showing how many cars were towed during the last snowstorm. Also just for your information this is from storms from 12/14 and 12/15.

Alderman Smith stated on average we have about how many snow emergencies during the course of the year. About 10?

Captain Mara responded I will let Lt. Valenti address that.

Lt. Valenti replied actually last year we had three and the year before we had four. So actually it is not that many. Last year they all came in December. We didn't have one after December 15 I believe.

Alderman O'Neil asked so the recommendation from the Police Department is that we raise the fee from \$85 to \$125 and \$25 of that comes back to the City to cover costs.

Lt. Valenti answered yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked so the tow companies will end up with \$100.

Lt. Valenti answered yes.

Captain Mara stated an additional point I would like to make is the Police Department feels that by raising that fee it puts the burden on the people who are actually violating the ordinance by keeping their cars out there. Also the City feels that it would act as more of a deterrent for people to move their cars.

Alderman O'Neil stated the policy as it is now is after 24 hours the car is removed from the impound lot and then goes into storage with whatever tow company towed it originally. Is that correct?

Lt. Valenti responded correct. After 24 hours the contractor who towed the vehicle tows it back to their lot and proceeds with storage costs.

Alderman Smith asked how many cars are towed on a snow emergency night.

Lt. Valenti answered on average there are roughly 200 vehicles towed.

Alderman O'Neil asked am I correct that if you had more wreckers you could actually tow more.

Lt. Valenti answered correct.

Alderman O'Neil moved to approve the recommendation of the Police Department to increase the cost of snow emergency towing fees from \$85 to \$125. Alderman

Smith duly seconded the motion. Chairman Sysyn called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman O'Neil asked so this is going to the full Board next week.

Deputy City Clerk Johnson answered it would go to the full Board and we will also bring it to the CIP Committee this evening.

Alderman O'Neil asked and that gives you enough time, Lt. Valenti.

Lt. Valenti answered yes. We have a meeting tomorrow at 10 AM with the wrecker companies.

Alderman O'Neil responded but the full Board will still have to approve it next week.

Lt. Valenti replied that is correct.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Smith it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee